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ABSTRACT

The Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges developed this series of criteria for use by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges as a basis for developing standards for evaluating the collective faculty of a college. Criteria dealing with the characteristics of the faculty focus on the following: (1) the hiring process, suggesting that each college insure that faculty are chosen for their ability to perform their professional responsibilities and their understanding of the characteristics of the students they will serve; (2) preparation in the discipline, suggesting that more than 90% of the full- and part-time faculty should possess qualifications that at least meet state minimum hiring standards, and more than 50% should exceed the state minimum hiring standards; (3) staff development, focusing on the accessibility and faculty awareness of professional development opportunities, and the adoption of measures of faculty currency in their field; (4) evaluation, suggesting that the evaluation process focus on faculty effectiveness, currency in his/her field, extracurricular activities, service to the community, and self-evaluation and identification of self-determined goals; (5) assignment and load, recommending faculty involvement in the accreditation process and in academic senates and that data be collected to evaluate instructors' performance in non-teaching roles and measure faculty-wide participation in committees; (6) faculty effectiveness, suggesting that evaluation of the faculty as a whole measure the percentage of faculty judged by students and their peers to be satisfactory or better, and the percentage who have received training in pedagogy and working with a multicultural student body; and (7) staff diversity, encouraging colleges to strive for racial and cultural diversity in their faculty and staff. The final section argues that the ideal measure for evaluating the collective faculty is the degree to which they contribute to the motivation and achievement of students. (JMC)

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Accreditation: Evaluating the Collective Faculty.

Prepared by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, Sacramento.

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THE ACADEMIC SENATE
For California Community Colleges
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1990 SPRING SESSION
ATTACHMENT A

Educational Policies Committee

# ACCREDITATION: EVALUATING THE COLLECTIVE FACULTY

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges recommends that the following criteria be used by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges as a basis for developing standards for evaluating the collective faculty of a college.

Accreditation reports always include the judgment that the college has an excellent and committed faculty. However, neither the Accrediting Commission nor anyone else has defined criteria for reaching such a judgment. The questions proposed in this paper should serve well as a way to detect areas where further inquiry is warranted and where policy changes may be appropriate. It is the fundamental assumption of this proposal that evaluation should measure outcomes where possible and in a context that gives such data meaning. However, it is also important to look for the institutional support vital to fostering and sustaining an excellent faculty. Of course, no evaluation of a collective faculty would be complete without data about their qualifications and achievements.

## I. Characteristics of the Faculty

### A. Hiring Process

The selection of new faculty is so important that it is appropriate to address it first. Each college should have a hiring process that ensures that faculty are chosen for their ability to perform their professional responsibilities and their understanding of the characteristics of the students they will serve.

1. At a minimum, the hiring process should include a skills demonstration by the prospective faculty member. Knowledge of the subject matter should be assessed as well as ability to communicate including skillful presentation, enthusiasm, and attention to student response.

2. The process for hiring part-time faculty should not waive any of the above elements. (Availability is all too often the single greatest selection criteria for initial hiring of part-time faculty.)

3. Faculty involvement in hiring should be ensured in a formal, written procedure*

4. Students demonstrably profit from exposure to a diverse faculty. The hiring process should reflect that need by, at a minimum, observing the principles and goals mandated by Assembly Bill 1725.*

B. Preparation in the Discipline

The percentage of the faculty who have a certain degree or quantity of experience is not an exact measure of quality, but it may indicate an area where further inquiry is appropriate.

1. What is the percentage of the faculty who meet the new minimum qualifications as specified in the Disciplines List for the area or areas in which they offer service?* More than 90% of the full-time and part-time faculty should possess qualifications that meet or exceed state minimum hiring standards.

2. What is the percentage of the faculty who possess at least a master's degree in the area or areas in which they offer service, or, for disciplines in which the master's degree is not required, the percentage who possess a bachelor's degree in any field? More than 50% of the full-time and part-time faculty should possess qualifications that exceed state minimum hiring standards.

C. Staff Development

1. Accessibility

Fostering an excellent faculty requires providing adequate resources for staff development. Such programs should include opportunities to work on institutional issues but also opportunities to improve teaching skill and to keep current in the faculty member's discipline. Effective faculty development programs have the following characteristics:

a. A substantial amount of self-determination and design is done by individual faculty members. Support should be provided not only for group or institution-wide programs but also for individually designed programs.

*Here and elsewhere in this document matters that are mandated for California's public community colleges are recommended as standards for all institutions.

b. Program and resource availability is tied to need rather than time cycles. In this regard, traditional sabbatical leave programs, while essential, are not by themselves sufficient evidence of an effective professional development program.

2. Faculty Awareness

For faculty to make effective use of the opportunities available to them, they must be generally aware of what professional development activities are available and aware of how to secure institutional support for their participation in those activities.

3. Keeping Current in the Discipline

There is no standard way to keep current in one's field and no standard way by which colleges attempt to measure whether faculty members are staying current. The primary goal of including the issue of keeping current here is to encourage colleges to adopt some measure for assessing whether individuals are keeping current and, then, to report the resulting data for the faculty as a whole.

a. What is the percentage of the faculty who, during the previous five years, have taken at least one course in the area or areas in which they offer service or worked outside the college in the discipline in which they serve?

b. What is the percentage of the faculty, who, during the last three years, have attended at least one professional conference in the area of their discipline?

c. For faculty other than those included in "a" or "b", is there some program or support for encouraging them to do so?

D. Evaluation

Another means to fostering an excellent faculty is for the college to have an evaluation policy and procedure that assesses the most important characteristics of an individual faculty member and provides encouragement for improvement. Effective professional evaluation processes have the following characteristics:

1. The process has a means for assessing how effective the faculty member is in performing his/her professional assignment. Responses from those who are served by the faculty member as well as by peers are essential to this process.

2. The process contains a means for assessing how the faculty member remains current in his/her field and what conferences,

off-campus professional activities, professional development activities and other relevant activities have been undertaken to accomplish this goal.

3. The process has a means for assessing what extra-curricular college activities are performed by the faculty member including college committees, college governance processes, student activities, and/or statewide professional activities.

4. The process includes assessing what service to the community the instructor provides by participation in voluntary organizations, serving on governmental committees, giving speeches or otherwise giving of his/her expertise.

5. The process provides for self-evaluation and identification of self-determined goals as important aspects of the process.

E. Assignment and Load

A vital form of institutional support for an excellent faculty is appropriate recognition and adequate flexibility in terms of assignment and load to foster innovation, professional development, creativity, and effectiveness in carrying out institutional responsibilities other than teaching, counseling, or serving in the library. These professional activities outside the classroom, the counseling center, and the library have become a much more important part of a faculty member's responsibilities in recent years as community colleges move further away from a model identified with primary and secondary schools. Since colleges increasingly depend on faculty for the performance of a variety of professional responsibilities, therefore the evaluation of the faculty must measure the success at a particular college of involving the faculty in these expanded duties.

1. What data are collected to evaluate the work of faculty performing non-teaching roles such as advising and recruiting students, developing curriculum, hiring and evaluating other faculty, and serving on college committees? Does the load of the faculty realistically encourage performance of these associated responsibilities?

2. What percentage of the faculty serve on college committees?

3. Have the faculty established an effective academic or faculty senate? This academic senate should be able to carry out its responsibilities for academic and professional matters at the college. The college should provide adequate support to the senate to enable it to meet its responsibilities and appropriate

delegation of authority should take place from the governing board to the senate.

F. Faculty Effectiveness

There are real difficulties encountered in assessing faculty effectiveness. There is no set of skills which every teacher should use. Counselors can be effective using any one of a variety of approaches. There is no single correct way for librarians to work with students. Another difficulty in assessing faculty is that when students do the evaluating they may very well assume an easy or entertaining teacher is a good teacher. When faculty peers do the assessing, they, too, may judge on how well they like the faculty member or how similar his/her style is to their own. Nonetheless, if students in general are reporting mediocre ratings and few faculty are judged to be excellent, there is a problem. When faculty do judge a colleague to be barely adequate or worse, if there is no program for the improvement of that instructor's skill, there is a problem. Faculty can certainly learn to be effective without taking classes in teaching techniques. However, one sign of a faculty committed to excellent teaching is the number who do take formal instruction in teaching strategies, especially techniques and strategies for reaching students from ethnic backgrounds different from their own.

1. What is the percentage of the faculty that are judged by students to be highly satisfactory? What is the percentage judged by students to be satisfactory? What is the percentage judged by peers to be highly satisfactory? What is the percentage judged by peers to be satisfactory? If the college's evaluation system does not yield data that can be combined in exactly this way, then the closest similar data should be provided. What is done to improve the skills of faculty? Is there a formal program for improving the skills of those who get student or peer reviews that indicate they have skills below the average for the faculty as a whole?

2. What is the percentage of the faculty who have had formal instruction in pedagogy, including those faculty members who have received pedagogical training as an in-service activity?

3. What is the percentage of the faculty who have received training in dealing with a multi-cultural student body? What is the percentage of the faculty who have received training in the diversity of learning styles?

4. What data are collected to evaluate the effectiveness of counselors, librarians, and other non-classroom faculty?

G. Staff Diversity

The hiring process, staff development program, evaluation system, pattern of assignment and load, and measures of discipline preparation and faculty effectiveness should all be organized to help the community college ensure that the faculty and administration it hires and retains are people who are sympathetic and sensitive to the racial and cultural diversity in the colleges and are themselves representative of that diversity.

## II. Measures of Student Success

The ideal measure for a faculty, an administration, or a college would be the degree to which they contribute to the motivation and achievement of the college's students. However, since the student body at a particular college is different from the student body at every other college in ways that are difficult to measure, even data about student achievement may mean little. For example, a college with a high transfer rate may owe this success to the quality of its faculty, but it may also owe it to the nature of its students or some combination. Sorting out the precise cause is impossible. Thus, any data about student success would be of little or no value as a measure of the effectiveness of a faculty unless the data are used as one of a number of measures and compared to other colleges with similar student bodies.

A. What is the percentage of students who receive degrees as compared to other colleges with similar student bodies? What is the percentage of students who receive certificates as compared to other similar colleges? What is the percentage of students who transfer as compared to other similar colleges?

B. What is the percentage of students who complete the semester compared to colleges with similar student bodies?

C. What is the percentage of students who complete the goal they set for themselves as compared to other colleges with similar student bodies: transfer, associate degree, certificate of achievement, or other goal?

D. What is the percentage of students in basic skills and ESL classes who successfully complete these courses? What is the percentage of those students who successfully complete a second course which has, as its prerequisite, a basic skills or ESL course which the student successfully completed?

E. What is the retention rate for ethnic minority and disabled students? How does that retention rate compare to the retention rate for the college's student body as a whole?



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